

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

Please amend the claims as follows:

1-7. (Cancelled)

8. (Previously presented) A semiconductor substrate composed of silicon, the semiconductor substrate having gettering sites composed of a bulk microdefect (BMD) layer formed at a predetermined depth from the surface of the semiconductor substrate by performing initial thermal treatments on the semiconductor substrate, but having no Denuded Zone (DZ) in an upper portion thereof, the initial thermal treatments including a first thermal treatment performed at a temperature within 650-750 °C for 30-240 minutes and a second thermal treatment performed at a temperature within 900-1100 °C for 30-120 minutes after the first thermal treatment,

wherein the predetermined depth is smaller than or equal to a diffusion distance of metal impurities to the gettering sites.

9. (Previously presented) A semiconductor substrate composed of silicon, the semiconductor substrate on which top surface an epitaxial layer having a predetermined thickness is formed, the semiconductor substrate, on which the epitaxial layer is formed, having gettering sites composed of a bulk microdefect (BMD) layer formed below the epitaxial layer by performing initial thermal treatments on the semiconductor substrate, the initial thermal treatments including a first thermal treatment performed at a temperature within 650-750 °C for 30-240 minutes and a second thermal treatment performed at a temperature within 900-1100 °C for 30-120 minutes after the first thermal treatment,

wherein nitrogen atoms that function as precipitation nuclei of the gettering sites are added to the semiconductor substrate, and

the thickness of the epitaxial layer is smaller than or equal to a diffusion distance of metal impurities to the gettering sites.

10. (Previously presented) A semiconductor substrate composed of silicon, the semiconductor substrate having gettering sites composed of a bulk microdefect (BMD) layer at a predetermined depth from the surface of the semiconductor substrate, but having no Denuded Zone (DZ) in an upper portion thereof, wherein the predetermined depth is smaller than or equal to a diffusion distance of metal impurities to the gettering sites.

11. (Previously presented) A semiconductor substrate composed of silicon, the semiconductor substrate on which principal surface an epitaxial layer having a predetermined thickness is formed, and having gettering sites composed of a bulk microdefect (BMD) layer below the epitaxial layer,

wherein nitrogen atoms that function as precipitation nuclei of the gettering sites are added to the semiconductor substrate, and

the thickness of the epitaxial layer is smaller than or equal to a diffusion distance of metal impurities to the gettering sites.

12. (Currently amended) ~~The method of claim 1,~~ A method for fabricating a semiconductor device comprising the steps of:

(a) performing a first thermal treatment at a temperature within 650-750 °C for 30-240 minutes; and

(b) after the step (a), performing a second thermal treatment at a temperature within 900-1100 °C for 30-120 minutes,

wherein the first and the second thermal treatments are a sequence of thermal treatments initially performed on a semiconductor substrate composed of silicon after the semiconductor substrate is introduced into a fabricating process, and the first and the second thermal treatments are performed sequentially in the same heating apparatus, and

wherein in the step (b), gettering sites composed of a bulk microdefect (BMD) layer are formed at a predetermined depth from the surface of the semiconductor substrate, but no Denuded Zone (DZ) is formed in an upper portion of the semiconductor substrate.